



EURO MPM
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in Project Management

Time Management Methods

Case: Cafeteria

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1 Introduction

Time Management. Is it possible to manage time, one of universe's fundamental structures? Although it might be a common understanding that the topic is not about managing the time itself, as till now it is not commonly known how to change its structures and besides of fantasy stories nobody was able to travel in time, the defined name might sound somewhat mislabeled.

Time Management as we know it deals with management of activities, the physical actions within time and their outcomes. It is about the questions "How much time do I need to fulfill certain actions?", "How do I array the actions to achieve a goal in the most designated way?" and "What should I do to make a better use of my time?". Yes, especially the last question seems to gnaw on people's mind, as time is a strictly limited resource in their lives. People realized it already in their early days so they started to develop practices how to organize the little time they have.

The methods described within this paper start with the one seeming the most trivial, the To-Do list, describing the tasks someone wants or needs to fulfill. But these basic steps are the most hardest and important ones, as time management is not about writing down steps one would like to take, but actually about taking them. It is about assessment, self-awareness and discipline.

2 Time management Matrix

2.1 Introduction of Time Management Matrix¹

Time management matrix can be described and built in several ways, depending on what the person who is going to use it think that is more important. It is possible to have for example Crisis on the first quadrant and Preparation/planning on the second or vice-versa. The most important by the time management matrix is that the user has to decide which things are the most valuable on which to spend the time and do what.

¹ www.uws.edu.au/download.php?file_id=19289&filename=Adapting_to_Univesity.pdf&mimetype=application/pdf

Stephen Covey's book "First Things First" has a very good example of a Time Management Matrix like the one below.

Important	Urgent	Not Urgent
	I (MANAGE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis • Medical emergencies • Pressing problems • Deadline-driven projects • Last-minute preparations for scheduled activities 	II (FOCUS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation/planning • Prevention • Values clarification • Exercise • Relationship-building • True recreation/relaxation
	Quadrant of Necessity	Quadrant of Quality & Personal Leadership
Not Important	III (AVOID) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions, some calls • Some mail & reports • Some meetings • Many "pressing" matters • Many popular activities 	IV (AVOID) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trivia, busywork • Junk mail • Some phone messages/email • Time wasters • Escape activities • Viewing mindless TV shows
	Quadrant of Deception	Quadrant of Waste

Table 1: Time Matrix

To get a better understanding of the Matrix each quadrant has its own significance and it is vital to identify distribute the tasks according to its characteristics.

Quadrant I is Urgent and Important. This is the Quadrant of Crisis as it deals with significant results that require immediate attention. Some people spend most of their time in this Quadrant and experience stress and burnout doing crisis management. While leaders need to spend time in this Quadrant because it is the place where they manage, produce and respond to needs, they must realize that many important

activities become urgent through procrastination, or because of a lack of prevention and planning.

Quadrant II is important but not urgent. This is the Quadrant of Quality where leaders do long range planning, anticipate and prevent problems, empower others, and increase skills through personal development. Ignoring this Quadrant enlarges Quadrant I, creating stress, burnout and deeper crises. Quadrant II does not act on leaders, they must act on it.

Quadrant III is Urgent but Not Important. This is the Quadrant of Deception because here leaders react to things that are urgent assuming they are also important. Often the urgency of these matters is based on the priorities and expectations of other people. Operating here produces a shortterm focus, broken relationships and a loss of control. Leaders spend a lot of time in Quadrant III meeting other people's priorities and expectation, thinking they are actually in Quadrant I.

Quadrant IV is Not Urgent and Not Important. This is the Quadrant of Waste reserved for those activities that are done as an escape from Quadrant I and III activities. Examples of such activities include reading light novels or watching mindless television shows. Quadrant IV is not survival, it is deterioration. True recreation takes place in Quadrant II.

2.2 Case

If we apply it to the Cafeteria case it would look like this one:

Important	Urgent	Not Urgent
	<p>I (MANAGE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy MDF and additional materials • Built the furniture within the cafeteria with the help of architecture students • Buy the coke, coffee and snack machines • Paint the walls – 2 days 	<p>II (FOCUS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up the room – 1 day Prevention • Set up the furniture within the cafeteria Values clarification • Install the coke, coffee and snack machines • Set up the illumination – 1 day 2 days

	Quadrant of Necessity	Quadrant of Quality & Personal Leadership
Not Important	III (AVOID) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report the project to the students 	IV (AVOID)
	Quadrant of Deception	Quadrant of Waste

Table 2: Time Matrix Cafeteria

2.3 To-do list

Most of the concepts demonstrated by the time management matrix can be applied using the to-do lists method. A to-do list is a simple method of keeping track of tasks that need to be done, in order to really keep track of these things, it is important to write them down on a paper. It is an intensive effort to prioritize and complete tasks in an ordered way, the whole day, every day.

A To-do list should be kept in a place that can be carried out, for example a PDA that fits in the pocket. It is also easy to find in the market several printed to-do lists. They may vary from one another, but the basic elements can be seen below:

TO-DO List Figure 2. Sample to-do list for prioritizing tasks			
Date _____			
Time Quadrant (A, B, C, D)	Priority (1, 2, 3, . . .)	Activity or Task	Done

Table 3: PRO-FARM To-do list

2.3.1 Steps for a To-Do List

First it is important to review the objectives, strategic and tactical plans. Then review yesterday's list for unfinished tasks. It is important to recall all the events and deadlines that are about to happen. Making a brainstorm and writing down the tasks that have to be accomplished today on the Activity or Task column is the main point. After having a list the next step is to rank each item according to importance and urgency in the first column:

- A--important/urgent
- B--important/not urgent
- C--not important/urgent
- D--not Important/not urgent

2.3.2 Prioritizing the to-do list

After classifying the tasks it is important to prioritize the events for the day in numerical order in the second column. The A tasks almost always come first, then the B activities. The C tasks sometimes have to be done because of their urgency but they should be avoided because they are not important. The D activities should be almost always avoided crossed off the list, they are just waste of time.

2.3.3 Taking the steps

It is vital to follow the work that has been already done, or, complete the tasks as you have prioritized them. Once a task has been started it should be finished. A very good way to avoid crisis in the future is to do some B activities every day, because they will not become A activity. Avoiding C and type D activities, not procrastinating and staying disciplined is a good follow up for the list.

If the activity cannot be finished during the day it is important to move it to the next day. If it is finished mark on the table. Some notes are also important and can be written on the back of the list, if not a PDA. The most important thing about a to-do list is to keep it at all times and always actual.

2.3.4 Case

The following table presents the case of the implementation phase of a Cafeteria on the Architecture building according to the project that is being developed for some EUROMPM students.

TO-DO List Cafeteria Project – Implementation Phase			
Date March 3, 2008			
Time Quadrant (A, B, C, D)	Priority (1, 2, 3, . . .)	Activity or Task	Done
A	1	Buy MDF and additional materials	
A	2	Built the furniture within the cafeteria with the help of architecture students	

A	3	Buy the coke, coffee and snack machines	
A	4	Clean up the room – 1 day	
B	5	Set up the furniture within the cafeteria	
B	6	Install the coke, coffee and snack machines	
B	7	Paint the walls – 2 days	
C	8	Set up the illumination – 1 day 2 days	

Table 4: To-do list Cafeteria

3 Controllable Time Worksheet

Controllable Time Worksheet				
Tuesday, April 12, 2005				
Number of hours you plan to work				8.00
Meetings scheduled				3.50
Uncontrollable time				
Routine activities				
Visitor interruptions				
Phone calls				1.00
Crisis				0.50
Total uncontrollable time				1.50
Estimate of total controllable time				3.00

Do today	Item on to-do list	Priority	Hours	Hours today
x	Newsletter insert	1	1.00	1.00
x	Lucent workbook	1	1.50	1.50
x	Phoenix travel plans	2	0.25	0.25
	Printer cleaning research	2	0.50	0.00
	Download new fonts	3	1.00	0.00
	Call Kristin	4	0.25	0.00
	Filing	4	0.50	0.00
Estimate of total to-do list time			5.00	2.75

Tuesday, April 12, 2005	
Estimated controllable time	3.00
Planned to-do list time	2.75
Remaining controllable time	0.25

Adapted from *Leave the Office Earlier* (Broadway Books, 2004)
By The Productivity Pro®, Laura Stack, MBA, CSP

3.1 Introduction to the *Controllable Time Worksheet*

The *Controllable Time Worksheet* is meant to be an exact plan for each day (work) activities. The version described here was proposed by Laura Stack in her book *Leave the Office Earlier*. It is a combination of a prioritized daily To-Do list which helps out estimating time by adding time leaks. Performed on a daily base it helps assessing the needed time properly. The draft worksheet is offered with the advice to make each day's schedule a day in advance to allow rescheduling on time and avoid constant rescheduling during the day. It allows to have a free and prepared mind for the next day while going to bed.

One of the main advantages of the method is to reveal and keep track of the time leaks which occur during a day. Such hidden time consumers like phone calls and visitor interruptions, here described as *uncontrollable time*, need to be detected to allow a proper time planning within a day. Harold Kerzner (p. 281) amongst others specifies the following time robbers in the project management environment:

- Telephone calls, mail and email
- Waiting for people
- Lack of adequate responsibility and commensurate authority
- Too much travel
- Too many meetings
- Day-to-day administration
- Lack of a job descriptions

Applied with the proper patience it is a good tool to assess daily procedures and to calculate tasks within a detailed daily scope.

3.2 Applying the *Controllable Time Worksheet* on the Cafeteria case

As the time worksheet is only applicable to one person for a certain day, the schedule presented below is to be applied for one of the project members.

Controllable Time Worksheet			
Dienstag, Januar 08, 2008		Hours	
	Number of hours you plan to work	0,00	8,00
	Meetings scheduled	0,00	2,00
Uncontrollable time			
	Routine activities	0,25	0,00
	Visitor interruptions	0,25	0,00
	Phone calls	0,50	0,00
	Crisis	0,50	0,00
	Total uncontrollable time		1,50
Estimate of total controllable time			4,50

Do today	Items on to-do list	Priority	Hours	Hours today
x	Meeting with FASTA	1	1,00	1,00
x	Buy MDF and additional materials	1	3,00	3,00
x	Research about coffee and snack machine vendors	1	2,00	2,00
Estimate of total to-do list time			6,00	6,00

Dienstag, Januar 08, 2008		Hours
	Estimated controllable time	4,50
	Planned to-do list time	6,00
	Remaining controllable time	-1,50

4 Pareto Analysis

4.1 Introduction of Pareto analysis

The purpose of Pareto Analysis is to observe the problems and determine their frequency of occurrence. This, in turn, gives you the information you need to prioritize your effort to ensure you are spending your time where it will have the most positive impact. Pareto Analysis is based on the classical 80/20 rule. Let's assume you have problem with a product failure, based on a number of causes. Through observation and collecting metrics, you determine there are eight causes. Rather than attacking the causes randomly, a Pareto Analysis might show that 80% of the problems are caused by the top three causes. This gives you information to know which causes to solve first. The tool associated with this problem solving technique is the Pareto Chart.

The Pareto chart is a specialized version of a histogram that ranks the categories in the chart from most frequent to least frequent. A Pareto Chart is useful for non-numeric data, such as "cause", "type", or "classification". This tool helps to prioritize where action and process changes should be focused. If one is trying to take action based upon causes of accidents or events, it is generally most helpful to focus efforts on the most frequent causes. Going after an "easy" yet infrequent cause will probably not reap benefits.

The Italian scientist Vilfredo Pareto was the first person who developed this chart as part of an analysis of economics data more than 100 years ago. He determined that a large portion of the economy was controlled by a small portion of the people within the economy. Likewise, one doing analysis of accidents or events may find that a large portion of the accidents are caused by a small population of causes. The "Pareto Principle" states that 80% of the problems come from 20% of the causes.

4.2 Pareto analysis in Cafeteria project

In our cafeteria case, we will use Pareto chart, in order to separate `vital few` from `trivial many`. It means we will clarify which task(s) are more important for us i.e. which task(s) should be done first and which one(s) should be done aftermath. Therefore, we decided to take the number of days as a measurement, which will be spent for each task. We are planning to finish all the tasks during the first quarter of March, but it is very important to remember that one activity might overlap another

and can last more than planned number of days. So, the total number of working days is 23, but the phase takes only 15 days.

Here we have the tasks needed to setup the cafeteria some of which are more vital and some of which less vital. For simplicity, we agreed on to gather them under some main headlines as:

1. Furniture – 12 days

-To buy MDF and additional materials

-Built the furniture and determine its design within the cafeteria with the help of architecture students

-Set up the furniture within the cafeteria

2. Machines – 6 days

-Buy the coke, coffee and snack machines

-Install the coke, coffee and snack machines

3. Paint the walls – 2 days

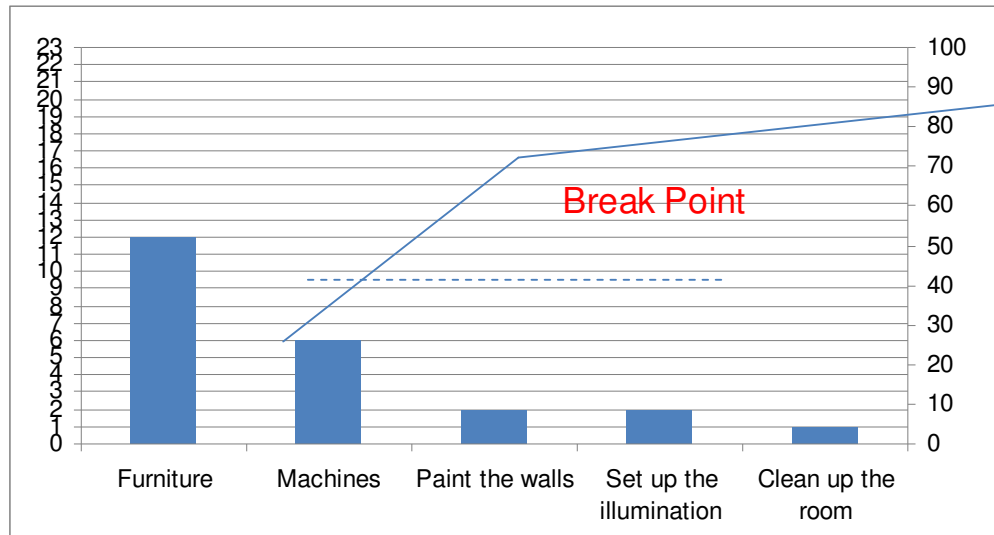
4. Set up the illumination – 2 day

5. Clean up the room – 1 day

6. Inauguration party – after all of the tasks be finished

Now it is easy to prepare the Analysis Sheet and Pareto Chart for our tasks:

Tasks	N of days	Percentage	Cum percentage
Buy, built and set up the furniture	12	52.2%	52.2%
Buy and install the machines	6	26.1%	78.3%
Paint the walls	2	8.6%	86.9%
Install the illumination	2	8.6%	95.5%
Clean up the room	1	4.4%	99.9%
Total	23		



As a result of the chart, we can separate the `vital few` from the `trivial many`. However, we need 18 days to complete first 2 tasks (12 days for furniture and 6 days for machines) but just 5 days to finish 3 tasks. Therefore, our prior activities would be to complete the tasks that relate to furniture and machines:

1. To buy MDF and additional materials
2. Built the furniture and determine its design within the cafeteria with the help of architecture students
3. Set up the furniture within the cafeteria.
4. Buy the coke, coffee and snack machines
5. Install the coke, coffee and snack machines

5 POSEC METHOD

POSEC is an acronym for ***Prioritize by Organizing, Streamlining, Economizing and Contributing.***

- **PRIORITIZE**-Your time and define your life by goals.
- **ORGANIZING**-Things you have to accomplish regularly to be successful. (Family and Finances)
- **STREAMLINING**-Things you may not like to do, but must do. (Work and Chores)
- **ECONOMIZING**-Things you should do or may even like to do, but they're not pressingly urgent. (Past-times and Socializing)

- **CONTRIBUTING**-By paying attention to the few remaining things that make a difference. (Social Obligations)

The method dictates a template which emphasizes an average individual's immediate sense of emotional and monetary security. It suggests that by attending to one's personal responsibilities first, an individual is better positioned to shoulder collective responsibilities.

Inherent in the acronym is a hierarchy of self-realization which mirrors [Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of needs"](#).

6 ABC Analysis

6.1 Introduction of ABC analysis

ABC analysis is sourced from Pareto analysis, which has been mentioned detailed hereinbefore. In 1951 the president of GE America applied the ABC analysis in inventory management. He separated the inventory of the components into A, B and C kind based on the cost of the components, and put A kind of components to key management level. This kind of methods is called ABC analysis. After that Pareto analysis becomes one of important methods of organizational management from the description and analysis of the social situation. Nowadays, ABC analysis applies to business management sector in wide range, such as inventory management, sales management, quality management, Working procedure management and Value engineering.

In 1973, America management expert, Alan Lakein introduced ABC analysis in his book *"How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life"*. He advocated manager should arrange the time schedules in every day. He considered every manager must manage a lot of issues in a day, but some of them are not able to be finished. Managers should separate the tasks into A, B and C according to the different importance. A kind of tasks are most important that must be finished at first, B kind of tasks are the second, C are the third. Alan Lahein considered if A and B kind of tasks are finished, it means 80% of work have been done.

6.2 ABC analysis in Cafeteria project

In the cafeteria case, we are going to apply the ABC analysis as one of important and useful tools to manage the time in this project. Ground on the Pareto analysis, ABC analysis will prioritize the Tasks in the project.

Now it is easy to prepare the Analysis Sheet for our tasks:

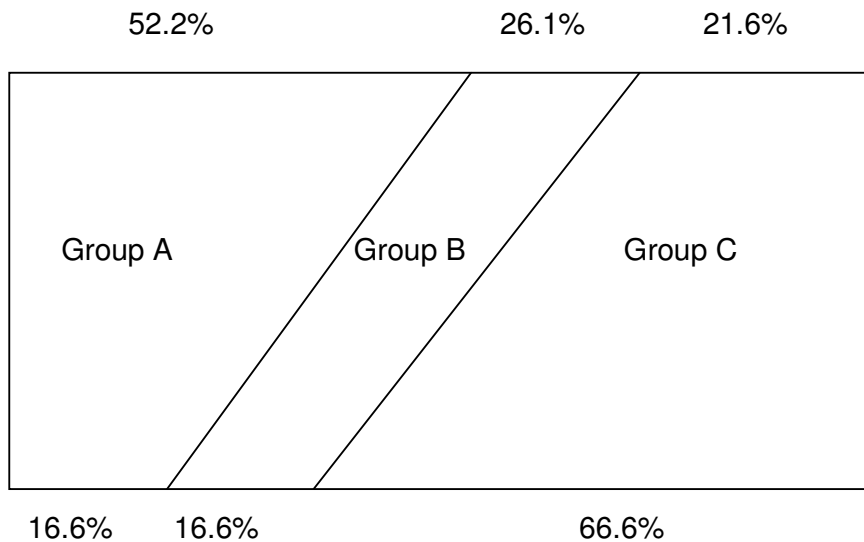
Tasks	N of days	Percentage	Cum percentage
Buy, built and set up the furniture	12	52.2%	52.2%
Buy and install the machines	6	26.1%	78.3%
Paint the walls	2	8.6%	86.9%
Install the illumination	2	8.6%	95.5%
Clean up the room	1	4.4%	99.9%
Total	23		

According to above table, we prepare a ABC analysis sheet in below table. From the sheet we can easily explore, “Furniture” is most important task, it only account for 16.6% of all tasks and more than 50% (52.2%) of the work in cafeteria project, so it should be A group; “machines” is the second important task, it account for 20%, so it is B group; the rest of tasks are C group. Based on ABC principle A and B account for 80% of work, and they must be prioritized, C could be finished after A and B.

Analysis sheet for ABC analysis

Tasks	% of all Tasks	% of finished project
Furniture	16.6%	52.2%
Machines	16.6%	26.1%
Others	66.6%%	21.6%

The percentage of finished project



The percentage of all Tasks in the project

According to above ABC analysis, "Buy, built and set up the furniture" should be list on the highest priority level, "Buy and install the machines" should be list on the second, and than is other tasks (Clean up the room, Paint the walls, Set up the illumination)

We can found A and B groups that are cumulated 78.3% of the total working time of our project, and they are also the critical path of the project. The total working time of Group A "Furniture" is 12 days, and it is comprised of following tasks:

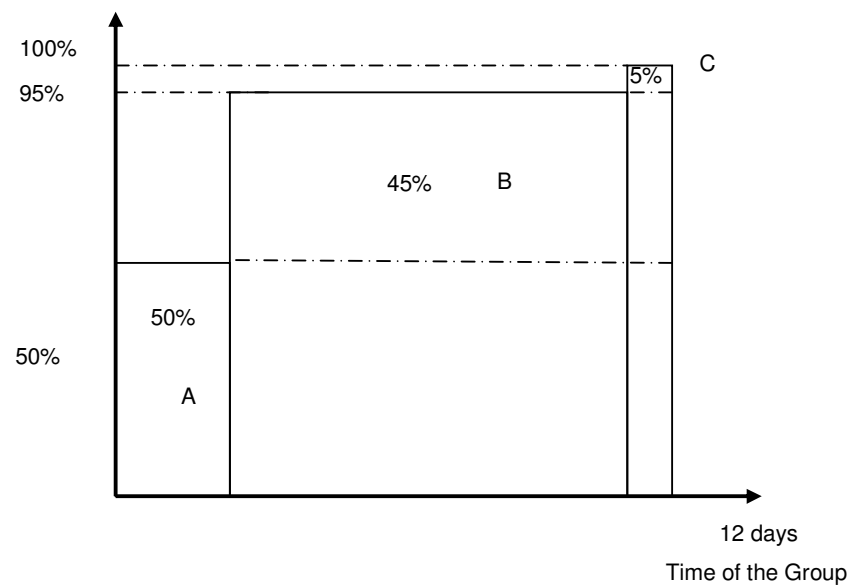
- Buy MDF and additional materials
- Built the furniture and Determine its design within the cafeteria with the help of architecture students
- Set up the furniture within the cafeteria

It means project team must finish them within 12 days. How to prioritize these activities could be a problem that we have to face it seriously. In these four activities, which activities are most important, less important and not important? We will also apply the ABC analysis in here based on Pareto Analysis.

We can distinguish them into three major constituents in this process: purchasing, designing & building and setting. **Purchasing of the material** is related to the cost

of this project (cost of maintaining and purchasing). **Designing & building** of the furniture is one of the main marketing strategies of our project (internal and external: to make marketing to our potential sponsors and customers), which is related to the long term development of the project. Considering to above analysis and the benefit to our project in future, **Purchasing** should be put in A level. Building & designing of the furniture is also main point of the project, but its impacts are less than above, so we list it on the B level. **Setting** is C level, it can be do at the end of project. The below chart is ABC analysis of these activities based on the contribution estimation of these activities in the task group.

The contribution for the task group



As result of above ABC analysis for” Buy, built and set up the furniture”, we can observe the priority in this Task group.

In conclusion, from above analysis we can formulate the priority of the tasks in the cafeteria project. It will help us to manage the time in effective and reasonable way.

7 Conclusion

Time management is one of most important project management process, and also it is a problem and challenge in human life, which is impossible to avoid. Many specialists contribute several tools and methods to help people to organize and manage the time in the project, organization and life.

In this report, we apply some most important and popular tools & methods to manage the time in the case project: cafeteria.

After the study, we conclude three major strategies for manage time in the project, jobs or life. Firstly, "priority", how to correctly prioritize the tasks in the project or life. It is directly related to whether you can successfully reach the goals of the project or life. Secondly, how to manage the working schedule based on the priorities if tasks, which you set before. And also control the time or tasks in the working time. Thirdly, how to motivate others or self to implement or execute tasks ground on the plan or schedule. However, this point is belonging to the Human Resources Management and Self-Management, it will directly and seriously influence the effect of the time management in the project and life.

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